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The Shakespeare Association Bulletin

Annual Bibliography of Shaksperiana for 1939

Shakspere's Gulls

A Warning-Piece Against Shakspere's Women

Montaigne and *King Lear*

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The Shakespeare Association of America aims to unite all the lovers of the poet and to encourage and enlarge the widespread interest in his works. It will serve as a means of communication in the Shakesperian world, reporting what is being done in his honor or service, whether on the stage or in the schoolroom, in club or in university. Its purpose includes co-operation in every enterprise that will be helpful to a knowledge of the man and his works, whether scholarly, educational, or theatrical.

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Other matters relating to the work of the Association should be referred to the Secretary.

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SHAKSPERE AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES

(A Classified Bibliography for 1939)
Compiled by
SAMUEL A. TANNENBAUM

The following bibliography, based on an examination of the contents of more than 1,400 periodicals and hundreds of books, is a continuation of that published in this BULLETIN in January, 1939. Perfunctory notices of books, blurbs, and reviews which contribute nothing new, have not been noted. The names of female writers are distinguished by a colon (instead of a period) after the initial letter of the baptismal name. The titles of books and pamphlets are printed in italics. If no year is mentioned in connection with an item, '1939' is to be understood. Reviews of books are listed (without a preceding number), without title, immediately after the books themselves. The discussion of a book is indicated by printing the title within single quotes. The abbreviations employed herein, and what they stand for, follow herewith:

A	—Anglia
Abstr.	—Abstract
Amer.	—American
Archiv	—Archiv f. d. Studium d. neueren Sprachen
B	—Bulletin
bib.	—bibliography
BJRL	—Bulletin of the John Rylands Library
Cambr.	—Cambridge
comp.	—compiler
Col.	—Columbia
CR	—Contemporary Review
CUP	—Cambridge University Press
Diss.	—Dissertation
d	—der, die, das, dem, etc.
dt.	—deutsch, deutscher, etc.
ed., edd.	—editor, editors
ELH	—Journal of English Literary History
Eliz'n	—Elizabethan
Engl.	—English, Englische
ES	—Englische Studien
facs., facss.	—facsimile, facsimiles
f	—für
Fr	—French
fr	—from
Ger	—German
GRM	—Germanisch - Romanische Monatschrift
HLQ	—Huntington Library Quarterly
HUP	—Harvard University Press
ils	—illustrated, illustrations
J	—Journal
JEGP	—Journal of English and Germanic Philology
Libr	—Library
Lit	—Literature
Ln	—London.
M	—Magazine
MLN	—Modern Language Notes
MLR	—Modern Language Review
Mo	—Monthly
MP	—Modern Philology
NQ	—Notes and Queries
NSN	—New Statesman & Nation
OUP	—Oxford University Press
P	—Press
pll	—plates
PMLA	—Publications of the Modern Language Ass'n.
port(s)	—portrait(s)
p. p.	—privately printed
PQ	—Philological Quarterly
Q	—Quarterly.
QR	—Quarterly Review
R	—Review, Revue
RES	—Review of English Studies
Ru	—Russian
SAB	—Shakespeare Ass'n Bulletin
SAH	—Stratford Herald
Sh	—Shakespeare, Shakspere
Shn	—Shaksperian
SJ	—Shakespeare Jahrbuch
SP	—Studies in Philology
RCC	—Revue des Cours et Conférences
TAM	—Theatre Arts Monthly
TLS	—Times Literary Supplement (Ln)
tr.	—translator
Tr	—Transactions
trn	—translation
u.	—und
U	—University
UP	—University Press
Xn	—Christian

A name and title-index will be published in the April issue of the BULLETIN.

The compiler's best thanks are due to the publishers, libraries, and personal friends who have assisted him in one way or another in making this compilation.

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11449. The relation of *Gorboduc* to the Senecan tragedies. [Abst of Diss].—M: Barnes.—U of Oklahoma B (Jan.), pp. 111-12.

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SHAKSPERE'S GULLS

By J. STEWART SCHELL

FOR a precursor of the gull as a type character in the dramas of Shakspere and other Elizabethan and Jacobean playwrights, one must look to the epigram literature of the 1590's. It was Sir John Davies who first completely limned the "gull" in *Epigrammes and Elegies,* which was written sometime between 1590 and 1598, probably about the middle of the decade. Next, writing in 1598, Edward Guilpin, in *Skialetheia,* added his conceit of "What a Gull is."

The word "gull" had an earlier use as a substantive, meaning a dupe, simpleton, fool, noddy, credulous person, but Davies added the virtuoso touch and first gave the gull a typical aspect, eminently fitting him for adoption by the dramatists of the nineties who were concerned with the comedy of humours and the satiric treatment of character.

After reading the following reproductions of the definitions of Davies and Guilpin, we shall observe how William Shakspere joined George Chapman and Ben Jonson in making effective dramatic use (in the case of Shakspere in a well-marked functional manner) of this new type character.

In Epigram 2 of *Epigrammes and Elegies,* Davies wrote:

OF A GULL

Oft in my laughing rimes I name a gull
But this new terme will many questions breede;
Therefore at first I will expresse at full
Vvho is a true and perfect gull indeede.

A gull is he who feares a veluet gowne,
And when a wench is braue, dares not speake to her;
A gull is he which trauerseth the towne,
And is for marriage knowne a common wooer.

A gull is he, which while he prowdly weares
A silver hilted rapier by his side,
Indures the lies, and knockes about the eares,
Whilst in his sheathe his sleeping sword doth bide.

A gull is he which weares good hansome cloathes,
And stands in presence stroking up his haire,
And filles up his vnperfect speech with othes,
But speakes not one wise word throughout the yeare:
But to define a gull in termes precise,
A gull is he which seemes, and is not wise.[1]

Edward Guilpin, writing in 1598, gives an additional portrait of the gull in Epigram 20 of *Skialetheia; or, A Shadowe of Truth, in Certaine Epigrams and Satyres.* This satirist, it will be noted, gives credit for the earlier definition to Davies:

TO *CANDIDUS*

Friend *Candidus,* thou often doost demaund,
What humours men by gulling vnderstand:
Our *English Martiall* hath full pleasantly,
In his close nips, describde a gull to thee:
I'le follow him, and set downe my conceit
VVhat a gull is: oh word of much receit!
He is a gull, whose indescretion,
Cracks his purse strings to be in fashion;
He is a gull, who is long in taking roote
In barraine soyle, where can be but small fruite:
He is a gull, who runnes himselfe in debt,
For twelue dayes wonder, hoping so to get;
He is a gull, whose conscience is a block,
Not to take interest, but wastes his stock;
He is a gull, who cannot haue a whore,
But brags how much he spends vpon her score:
He is a gull, that for commoditie
Pays tenne times ten, and sells the same for three:
He is a gull, who passing finicall,
Peiseth each word to be thetorical:
And to conclude, who selfe conceitedly,
Thinkes al men guls, ther's none more gull then he.[2]

The first gull of Shakspere's delineation appears in the person of Thurio, in *Two Gentlemen of Verona,* written at some time between 1591 and 1595. Thurio palpably lacks the foppishness and fatuous oaths of the simpletons

that Davies satirized, but a careful inventory indicates that in other *minutiae* Thurio follows, point for point, the gull type as it appears in dramatic presentations.

Like the gull pictured in Davies' epigram, Thurio is typical in his pretension to wit. Having engaged in word-combat with Valentine, Thurio egregiously proclaims himself the victor.

In common with Slender in *The Merry Wives,* Labesha in Chapman's *An Humourous Day's Mirth,* and Cokes in Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair* (to mention only a few examples), Thurio is the father's foolish choice for the hand of his unwilling daughter. Here Shakspere is at one with his fellow dramatists.

Of what Katherine E. Jessup has called the "witless-wordless lover type," Thurio is a notable representative, for he is almost totally inept.

Consistently with the gull type, Thurio writes "wailful sonnets." When Proteus advises the wooing of the unresponsive Silvia by this means, Thurio agrees, as he has a sonnet "that will serve the turn." Versifying upon a strictly neophyte basis is characteristic of the gull in the drama. Stephen, Matthew, and Sir John Daw are Jonsonian figures who are devoted to rime, as are the gulls of *Cynthia's Revels.* The propensities of Slender, in *The Merry Wives,* will receive subsequent consideration.

Equally indicative of the gull is Thurio's pride in his person. He decides to wear a boot to make his leg "somewhat rounder." Also he is concerned about what Silvia thinks of his face. This trait is found in many simpletons of the dramatists' creation.

Not mentioned by either Davies or Guilpin is the foolish ancestral pride of many of the boobies. In a satirical aside, one of the characters in *Two Gentlemen of Verona* refers to Thurio as deriv'd "from a gentleman to a fool." In Field's play, *A Woman is a Weathercock,* Sir Abraham

Ninny most prominently displays this foible. Shakspere's Sir Abraham Slender will be seen later to be similarily inclined.

Davies especially satirized the cowardice of the booby, and Thurio fits this specification. It will be recalled that when Valentine threatens the gull with instant death Thurio replies:

> I hold him but a fool that will endanger
> His body for a girl that loves him not.[4]

At the end of the play Thurio is contemptuously dismissed, consistent with the fate of so many of the gulls.

Thurio is not mere comic padding, for he has an integral part in the main plot of the play. We shall recur to the Bard's practice of using the gull in a vital way.

The Merry Wives of Windsor contains one of Shakspere's most significant gulls in the character of Abraham Slender, whom we find, at the beginning of the play, defending the dignity of his cousin Shallow. At once we see the gull's inordinate pride in family, as he praises Shallow's ancestors.

In the first scene of the play Shakspere makes a satirical thrust at his personal enemies, Justice William Gardiner and the latter's stepson William Wayte, in the characters Justice and Abraham Slender.[5]

Initially Slender is pictured as the candidate, willy nilly, of Cousin Shallow for the hand of Mistress Anne Page, who is also her father's choice for a union with Slender. The latter situation is conventional in portraiture of the gulls. In a scene with his fellow rascals, Falstaff confesses to Slender that he had broken the latter's head, at which Slender complains that he had been made drunk and had had his pocket picked by the cony-catching crew. Encouraged by Evans, Slender swears "by these gloves," "by this hat," and again "by these gloves," that his purse had been picked, and he makes the somewhat poignant remark, "I

am not altogether an ass." In this instance we recall the reference in the definition of Sir John Davies to the "othes" of the gulls. In this same scene Slender accuses various members of Falstaff's crew of having robbed him, but each of the accused in turn bullies the cowardly gull. The pre-Davies idea of the gull as the duped one is evident in Shakspere's delineation.

When Master Page is alone with his three visitors, Slender, remembering his *Book of Songs and Sonnets,* asks his servant Simple if the book is not upon his person. To this query the foolish servant replies that the book had been lent to Alice Shortcake upon All-hallowmas last. The tendency of the gulls to make love through the instrumentality of verse has been commented upon in the discussion of Thurio. At the end of the scene Anne Page re-enters. She directs the gentlemen to the dining room, but Slender, dazzled, swears that he is not hungry. Shakspere puts into the mouth of the gull the "forsooth's" which George Chapman had so well ridiculed in Labesha. Again we observe the "witless-wordless lover type." Protesting stupidly, "gentle Master Slender" is shooed to dinner by Mistress Anne.[6] Shakspere devotes much of the first scene of the play to the idiocy of Slender, who is of importance in setting the tone for this comedy whose prime purpose is to show John Falstaff in love.

Slender is characterized as the indifferent lover, encompassing the "unperfect speech" to which Davies made reference. The braggadocio air of the gull is pointed in a scene with Anne Page. Inquiring if any bears are loose in the town, Slender boasts:

> That's meat and drink to me, now. I have seen Sackerson loose twenty times, and have taken him by the chain; but, I warrant you, the women have so cri'd and shriek'd at it, that it pass'd.

The braggadocio of the simpletons, a gift from the *miles gloriosus* type, while not mentioned by either Davies or Guilpin, runs through the entire line of gulls.[7]

The final discomfiture of Slender is accomplished when he finds "a great lubberly boy" awaiting him at Eton, where

he had planned to meet Mistress Anne Page. Though Shakspere probably borrowed this latter device from Plautus's *Casina,* other Elizabethan dramatists likewise appropriated this strategem, to good effect.

The skillful manner in which Shakspere has drawn Slender has long been recognized by commentators. William Hazlitt, for example, with characteristic vigor declares that this gull is "a very potent piece of imbecility . . . the only first-rate character in the play."[8] Be this as it may, from first to last Slender has an important rôle in the development of the plot. He is not "filler," but a genuine motivating agency. Furthermore, as Slender has been shown indisputably to have been an attack upon William Wayte, the stepson of William Gardiner, "Shakespeare is here revealed for the first time as a master of personal satire, taking with devasting humour a satisfactory revenge for himself, his associates of the theatre, and Gardiner's victims in Southwark."[9]

In *Twelfth Night* the arresting form of Sir Andrew Aguecheek presents itself and proves upon subsequent examination to be one of the dramatist's most carefully delineated simpletons. Once more we find Shakspere presenting the gull very early in the action of the play, and in *Twelfth Night* with unusual attention he prepares the entrance of the gull. In this instance a notable bit of character-drawing is accomplished. As William H. Fleming has pointed out, this exposition has a two-fold dramatic function, for it not only describes Sir Andrew and prepares for his entrance, but it also serves in graphic manner to characterize Sir Toby Belch and Maria early in the drama. There is involved the psychological principle that Toby's and Maria's opinions of the gull are indexes to their own natures.[10]

Before Sir Andrew enters, we know that Sir Toby has chosen him for his niece Olivia. He is described as "a prodigal," thus fitting him into a segment of the Guilpin definition. In addition, he is shown to be possessed of a quarrel-

some humour, but "he hath the gift of a coward to allay the gust."[11]

When Shakspere brings Sir Andrew upon the stage, the gull at once demonstrates that he has been accurately described. He is unable to understand the word "accost" and begins to parrot the exuberant Sir Toby. The customary deficiency in will to which the gull is subject is likewise shown.

Stock situations into which the gulls fit are exemplified in Sir Andrew's handsome clothes, his pretension to wisdom, his "unperfact speech," his oaths, his indifferent wooing, and his constant parroting of other characters. The "echo" tendency is prominent in pictures of the boobies.[12] Drawn on by Sir Toby, the gull issues a challenge, in letter form, to the "Count's youth'.' This epistle is a masterpiece of stupid bravado. Presently Sir Andrew and the disguised Viola meet to engage in combat. They draw, but that is the extent of the action. Coward that he is, Sir Andrew declares: "I take the fault on me." But later, upon hearing Viola named a coward, Aguecheek recovers his courage and goes out to seek the supposed boy. Encountering Sebastian, who is Viola's brother and identical in appearance with her, Sir Andrew attacks him and receives a bloody coxcomb. Aguecheek offers to help the injured Sir Toby, who enters haltingly, but the latter replies: "Will you help?—an ass-head and a coxcomb and a knave, a thin-faced knave, a gull!" Olivia dismisses the crestfallen fool with the disdainful command, "Get him to bed, and let his hurt be look'd to."

Supplementing his comic function, the gull Andrew serves as a binding agent of plot elements. His mistaken attack upon Sebastian brings together brother and sister at the end of the play.

Hamlet contains one of Shakspere's most encaustic treatments of the gull in the person of Osric. This character is upon the highest level of his type, as he is a courtier of some importance. Introduced initially in the final act, Osric comes

to Hamlet bringing a message from Claudius. Hamlet inquires of Horatio, "Dost know this water-fly?" Upon receiving a negative answer, Hamlet explains:

> Thy state is the more gracious, for 't is a vice to know him. He hath much land, and fertile; let a beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the King's mess. 'T is a chough, but as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

Here we see the metamorphosis of country gull to court gull.

The complete witlessness of Osric is at once established in his voltefaces concerning the state of the weather. This situation is almost a replica of that in *Der Bestrafte Brudermord,* in which Phantasmo, the court fool, has Osric's place. While Osric on several occasions serves as a messenger, he has a tendency to newsmongering which is characteristic of not a few of the gulls. Shakspere is scornful, in his treatment, of the foppishness of Osric, who is of the same *genre* as Fastidious Brisk in *Every Man out.*

Though Osric has been described as an episodic humour study and also as fulfilling a tragic relief function, Cumberland Clark appears to offer a more vital explanation. Throughout the play, by means of contrast, Shakspere had been emphasizing "the refined tastes and intellectuality of Hamlet." All the witless characters—Polonius, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern—were dead when Osric was introduced. At the end of the play Shakspere wished once more to contrast the deeply thoughtful Hamlet and the shallow proponents of Court life.[13] The success of his effort is unmistakable.

Transferring our attention to *Othello,* we encounter Roderigo, who is listed in the *dramatis personae* as "a gulled gentleman." A study of this character reveals that he is a gull, not on the Davies-Guilpin model, but in the older meaning of a credulous, gullible person.

Roderigo appears in the first scene of the play, and at once we see that Iago controls his purse strings much as Sir Toby Belch, with perhaps better motives, had warded the

coffers of Slender. At the outset Roderigo demonstrates his puerile and credulous nature. Shakspere, drawing his dramaturgy carefully, had significant reasons for the introduction, at an early point, of this choice fatuity. In the first place, an Elizabethan audience immediately recognized a fool, and the latter's early advent captured the fickle interest of the groundlings. Secondly, Shakspere has suceeded, in the first scene of the play, in setting off the villainous character of Iago by presenting so vividly his tool, the simpleton Roderigo. This is a subtle stroke, and Shakspere could probably have found no quicker way of fixing the character of "honest" Iago. In the gulling of the simpletons, the gullers usually may be detected, tongue-in-cheek; there is nothing of this in Shakspere's handling of the situation, and this is but another instance of the dramatist's genius in taking a stock situation and altering it, to secure tremendous dramatic effect.

Throughout the action of the play, love-sick Roderigo is a useful tool for Iago. He shows the typical lack of wit and steadfastness of purpose marking the whole line of gulls. Egged on by the villain, the fool meets Cassio and is soundly cudgeled by the latter for his meddling. Beaten, and with his money almost spent, Roderigo is a pitiful spectacle.

Finally Roderigo agrees to a dual attempt to dispatch Cassio, and in the course of the last act he falls upon him, but is wounded. In the resultant confusion, Iago thrusts his sword into Roderigo, removing one more impediment to his desires. The gull dies before he can accuse Iago.

This is one of the few tragic treatments of the gull, and it again reveals Shakspere employing this type character significantly.

Cloten, in *Cymbeline,* is a character that closely approaches the gull type and should therefore be considered in this paper. When he is introduced, at the beginning of Act II, through the frequent use of asides Shakspere fixes his essentially foolish nature. His "little wit" is repeatedly

exemplified. As Cloten is the son of the Queen, it is necessary that most of the derisive comments be confined to asides. The assertions of Imogen, of course, furnish an exception. As soon as Cloten exits, a lord immediately exclaims:

> That such a crafty devil as his mother
> Should yield the world this ass!

In the scene of his introduction Cloten vigorously protests his right to utter oaths, and this element associates him with the typical gull. Guilpin, it will be recalled, brought to a close his epigram *To Candidus* with the following dictum:

> And to conclude, who selfe conceitedly
> Thinkes al men guls, ther's none
> More gull then he.

This particular is found in Cloten, for he refers to "foolish Imogen," and later groups her among the "fools."

In this play Cloten is to be observed in a council of war, in which his abilities, there revealed, place him above the ordinary gull in accomplishment. Finally Cloten fights with Guiderius, who enters with the former's head, declaring:

> This Cloten was a fool, an empty purse;
> There was no money in't. Not Hercules
> Could have knock'd out his brains, for he had none.
> Yet I not doing this, the fool had borne
> My head as I do his.

Later the young victor reports that he has sent Cloten's "clotpoll" down the stream. "Clot-poll" in Shakspere's day, it should be noted, had the meaning of a thick or "wooden head." (*N.E.D.*). As has been indicated, Cloten is a character of contradictory qualities, and certainly he is not among Shakspere's better portraitures. In him we find the very unusual combination of villain and gull. In certain respects Cloten has gull-like dimensions, while in other distinguishing points he falls short of the mark. Recognizing his complex makeup, one may still, without undue trepidation, place him among the quasi-gulls.

In this examination of Shakspere's gulls we have seen that in every case the simpleton has an integral structural func-

tion. Shakspere was too great an artist to use the gull as comic "filler"; with an eminent degree of achievement he fits the gull into the dramatic structure, holding up the mirror to nature. There is not an "improbable" drawing of the gull in any of his plays.

In comparing the manner in which Ben Jonson and Shakspere constructed their gulls, one finds that Jonson's gulls come as if from a fixed and often-used mold, while the gulls of Shakspere, though they come from a mold, evidence the fact that the master draftsman is constantly altering the pattern. The "gentle" playwright was too keen a craftsman to ignore the typical cast of the gull, but the booby is not mere caricature; he is essentially lifelike. It is a paradox that though Jonson is the Realist and Shakspere the Idealist, "in the deep and true sense the Idealist was the more real."[14]

Black-Foxe Military Institute
Los Angeles, Calif.

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[1]I[ohn] D[avies] and C[hristopher] M[arlowe], *Epigrammes and Elegies* (At Middleborough, n. d.), A3v.

[2][Edward Guilpin], *Skialetheia; or, A Shadowe of Truth, in Certaine Epigrams and Satyres* (London: by J. R. James Roberts for Nicholas Ling, 1598), A 6, recto and verso.

[3]Katherine E. Jessup, "Shakespeare's Comic Lovers," *The Shakespeare Association Bulletin,* Vol. IV, No. 4 (October, 1929), p. 106.

[4]V, iv. This and other references to the Shakspere text will be to William A. Neilson's *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare,* 3d Edition, 1910.

[5]Leslie Hotson, *Shakespeare versus Shallow,* pp. 109-110.

[6]The writer of the introduction to the Cambridge edition of *The Merry Wives* states that as a stage-direction following the first scene of the play he had written and later expunged: "He goes in; she follows with her apron spread, as if driving a goose."

[7]*Cf.* Gullio in *The Return from Parnassus,* Part I; Fastidious Brisk in *Every Man out;* Bubulcus in *Love Tricks;* Emulo in *Patient Grissil.*

[8]William Hazlitt, *Characters of Shakespear's Plays,* 1817, first ed., p. 330.

[9]Leslie Hotson, *op. cit.,* pp. 130-131.

[10]William H. Fleming, *Shakespeare's Plots,* 1901, pp. 329-30.

[11]*Cf.* Matthew in *Every Man in;* Young Barnacle in *The Gamester;* Chough in *A Fair Quarrel.*

[12]*Cf.* Blaneul in *An Humourous Day's Mirth;* Balurdo in *Antonio and Balurdo,* Part I; Sogliardo in *Every Man out;* Simplicius Faber in *What You Will.*

[13]Cumberland Clark, *A Study of Hamlet,* 1926, p. 122.

[14]T. Fairman Ordish, *Shakespeare's London,* 1897, pp. 247.

A WARNING-PIECE AGAINST SHAKSPERE'S WOMEN

By ARTHUR M. SAMPLEY

IF I had a son, I should warn him against Shakspere's women. I should want him to know them, yes; but to believe in them—that is another matter. I am quite sure that many a marriage has been spoiled because the husband read too much Shakspere in his youth. Those who grow alarmed over the increase of the divorce rate should look into this matter. They talk much of the dangers of a mother-fixation in a young husband; I am sure that the Shakspere heroine-fixation is equally dangerous.

The literary critics are wont to go into ecstasies over Shakspere's heroines, and their attitude is at least understandable. Consider Juliet, Portia, Viola, Beatrice, Rosalind, Desdemona, Cordelia, and Imogen. Where will you find a like galaxy of feminine charm? They are lovely to look upon, loyal to the death, of unquestionable virtue, witty and sprightly, popular with old and young, and completely unspoiled. They are neither prigs nor wantons; they maintain the ideal balance. With a knowledge of the world and a rare ability to manage men, they are never indelicate in behavior; and if they are occasionally a little broad in their speech, their absolute chastity has made even the Victorians forgive them.

I should like this hypothetical son of mine to know a group of girls like these, but I should dislike him to believe in them too seriously. To do so might cause him to think that there is an inexhaustible supply of Portias and Rosalinds, that the pretty girl across the aisle in his history class has all the virtues of Cordelia, or that he has only to consult the telephone book to find another Juliet.

The plain fact of the matter is that there are no Rosalinds. The heroine of the forest of Arden is a sort of dream girl assembled from the virtues and beauties of a dozen maidens. They are virtuous girls enough; and beautiful girls, though

not abundant and in fact hardly adequate in quantity, are no great rarity. Sprightly maidens there are too—even witty ones. Poised, self-confident young ladies are not uncommon and the wholesome, unspoiled girl is still with us. Take any of Rosalind's excellent qualities, and I will find a girl who has it. But what I cannot find is a girl who has them all.

I do not maintain that no such girl exists. I am not such a cynic as crabbed John Donne, and would start off on the pilgrimage could I hear of such a paragon. But that she is so rare as to be negligible, I am quite sure. Most girls have the defects of their virtues. The beautiful girl is apt to be vain, the virtuous priggish, the self-confident maiden over-aggressive, the wholesome girl naïve, and the clever one too often has a barbed tongue. The perfectly balanced character is, after all, beyond the perfection of nature.

Yet let us grant, for the sake of argument, that a Rosalind is a possibility in real life—a rare and happy accident. Still Shakspere misleads us. In his plays the world seems full of such young ladies—equally attractive, equally perfect. It might seem to a young reader of Shakspere that if he could not win a Rosalind, he might well hope to gain a Juliet, a Viola, or an Imogen. The landscape in Shakspere is populated with charming heroines. Fops and villains like Claudio and Oliver get delightful wives, such as Hero and Celia, and a man cannot be shipwrecked on a desert island without coming upon a Miranda.

The danger to a young man in reading Shakspere is thus twofold. He may believe that every attractive girl whom he sees is a potential Rosalind or Beatrice, in which case he is a fair mark for a designing, sophisticated girl, of whom there is a considerable proportion among the outwardly attractive. Or, if he avoids this obvious trap, he may fall into the more insidious error of expecting his wife to be another Portia. The first error will make only the man unhappy, but the second is equally unfortunate for the wife. Most women in the world make good wives—if the impossible is not expected of them. Some have a genius for homemaking; some are charming hostesses; some are well-read

and clever companions. The average man certainly gets as good a wife as he deserves and, more often than not, a better. It is unfair, then, to the average girl to have a husband who expects her to be another Beatrice or Cordelia in addition to rearing children and planning menus. The wife whose husband wishes her to be like his mother has a minor problem compared to that of her whose husband expects her to be a replica of Juliet.

Shakspere, indeed, seems constitutionally incapable of portraying a really bad woman in a convincing manner. Goneril and Regan are bad enough, but who really believes in them as human beings? The same criticism may be made of the Queen in *Cymbeline*. Lady Macbeth is, of course, an accomplice in murder, but she is none the less an ideal wife. A murderer could scarcely want a better. Even her crime is for her husband's sake. Cleopatra is a wanton, if you will, but a charming one. The portrayal of her character will not bring down the delinquency rate; more than one hard moralist has shed tears over her death.

Why should the greatest genius of English literature have presented so one-sided a view of women? He can hardly have believed in his heroines himself. We know little, it is true, concerning his relations with women, but what facts and traditions we do have hardly reveal Shakspere as an ideally happy husband. That he visited his wife rarely during the period of his maturity seems highly probable, and the hints which we glean concerning his life in London indicate that his love-life was (at best) not conventional. There are the Manningham story of his assignation with a citizen's wife, the reference to an unsuccessful love affair in *Willobie His Avisa,* the tradition about Sir William Davenant's parentage. Granting that all this is doubtful gossip, there are the sonnets to the Dark Lady in which a conviction of sin and a sense of moral revulsion mingle strangely with a powerful physical attraction. This too can perhaps be explained away, but all the evidence points in one direction. The women whom Shakspere knew and loved were no paragons.

It has been suggested with some plausibility that Shak-

spere learned about women from Robert Greene, that ill-starred playwright and pamphleteer, whose posthumous work contained a bitter attack on his great successor. Certainly Greene's Dorothea, in *James IV,* is as loyal and patient a wife as any in the First Folio. Greene is in fact chiefly to be remembered for his ideal heroines—Margaret in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* and a dozen or so equally gentle, uncomplaining women in his novels. Oddly enough, Greene, like Shakspere, was no ideal husband. A wife-deserter, he associated with prostitutes and vagabonds and had an illegitimate child by the sister of a notorious criminal. This unhappy man, wasted with dissolution and tortured by conscience, died a wretched death of a surfeit of pickled herring, but not before he had portrayed some of the most charming women in all literature.

The irony in the characterization of ideal heroines by the rakehelly Greene and the amorist Shakspere reminds us of the restless wanderer, John Howard Payne, who gave us the most poignant song of home. Many literary men put into their work the things which they have sought most and never succeeded in finding. Perhaps it was so with Shakspere in his treatment of women. Throughout his life he pursued his ideal woman—that blend of virtue, wit, and loveliness—to find her only in the forest of Arden and on the island of Prospero.

Such a seeker of feminine perfection would in any age be doomed to disillusion. One has only to study Ben Jonson's women to see how vain, shallow, and sensual were many of the fine ladies of that age, and no matter how idealistic Shakspere may have been, his keen insight into human nature must ultimately have revealed to him the truth. This consciousness of error must account, I think, for some of the railings against women and sex in the plays of the tragic period. As Mr. Logan Pearsall Smith has pointed out, the fulminations of Lear and Timon against the mere fact of sex are not only out of character; they reveal an abnormal, almost diseased, attitude of mind toward natural human relations.[1] Yet the same hand that wrote Lear's sadistic ranting against lechery portrayed the pure Cordelia. In the midst of disillusion, the mirage persisted.

It was in this so-called "tragic period" that Shakspere wrote his only play which portrays a woman in a bitterly satirical spirit. Cressida—not Cleopatra—is the real wanton. Love with her is feline stalking, culminating in physical passion; she might easily be a portrait of "the dark lady." But Cressida stands alone in the plays of Shakspere—the only unlikable woman who is at the same time real. Nor did Shakspere build around her a successful play. Unpopular in its day, *Troilus and Cressida* is little read now. Sustained satire was hardly the forte of a creator of fairyland.

Shakspere's portrayal of women was, then, very narrow in its scope; the charming heroine is almost his only type. It is true that in Lady Hotspur and in Brutus' Portia he gives us equally charming wives, but these are only Rosalind and Juliet grown a little older. Lady Macbeth has a more varied nature, and Dame Quickly is a masterpiece; but they are isolated figures, and Lady Macbeth, as I have already observed, is only a partial exception to the rule of perfection.

Not only does Shakspere fail in portraying bad women; he fails too—and this is a more serious charge—in delineating the average woman, the one who is a mixture of good and evil. There are in Shakspere no such characters as Hardy's Bathsheba Everdene and Eustacia Vye. These are the women whom a man needs to understand—creatures of good impulses, but wayward and uncertain, attractive to men but unable to judge them well, and most of all, uncertain of their own desires. How forthright is Rosalind, how devious is Bathsheba. How simple, for all her perfection, is Portia; how complex is Eustacia Vye. Of course, most women are neither Bathshebas nor Rosalinds, but the proportion of the former in the real world far outnumbers that of the latter.

Shakspere has, indeed, imparted some of this waywardness of spirit to his heroines—but always in minor matters. Juliet reviles Romeo when she hears of Tybalt's death, and in the next breath damns the nurse for agreeing with her.

This is waywardness, of course, but it only serves to heighten by contrast the unswerving loyalty of Juliet. It is Rosalind who says, "I will weep for nothing like Diana in the fountain, and will do that when you are disposed to be merry; I will laugh like a hyen, and that when you are inclined to sleep." Here is waywardness truly, but neither Orlando nor we believe her. The frailty of Shakspere's heroines is all on the surface; they never make a real error of heart. It is perhaps this surface frailty that gives them the beguiling appearance of reality; they speak like women, but they behave like angels.

Shakspere's failure to portray women as they are is the more remarkable in that his men have the complexity of life.[2] Hamlet and Othello, Macbeth and Lear are compact of good and bad; they have the irresolution and the cross-currents of life in their veins. The more we know Hamlet, the less we understand him; he is as real and perplexing to us as our best friends. But we understand Portia and Rosalind; they have a finality which is beyond life.

Yet I cannot in the end wish these heroines any different. A forest of Arden without a Rosalind is a poor place for a vacation, and a world without a Portia and a Beatrice seems a dull and mundane sphere. The disbelief in perfection is, after all, a malady of old age, and no one of us willingly grows old. When I read Shakspere now, I seem to return to a younger world where every bride would stab herself over her husband's dead body, where every sweetheart would set out afoot to meet her lover in Arden, and where beautiful Portias gladly give away themselves and their fortunes to impecunious young men. I should warn my son against Shakspere's women—yes; but I should only bind his arms to the mast that he might more safely listen to the sirens sing.

North Texas State Teachers College
Denton, Texas.

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[1] *On Reading Shakespeare,* New York, 1933, p. 9.

[2] There is one exceptional instance of a wayward woman in Shakspere—Gertrude, who seems unable to decide between Claudius and Hamlet. Though a real figure, she can hardly be called a completely successful character, perhaps because we see her chiefly through Hamlet's eyes.

MONTAIGNE'S *APOLOGIE* AND *KING LEAR*

[*Concluded*]

By W. B. D. HENDERSON

FOLLY and Madness had begun to fuse into one complex experience in "Hamlet," where at the outset of his tragic period Shakspere had announced through his hero that tragedy was the disruption and change of a great mind by subliminal forces, "oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason." Perhaps Montaigne helped frame even that concept. But if he did not, he surely confirmed it and gave it new suggestions that come into *King Lear:*

> ". . . . no eminent or glorious virtue, can be without some immoderate and irregular agitation" (282). "Dares not Philosophy thinke that men produce their greatest effects, and nearest approaching to divinity, when they are beside themselves, furious, and madde? We amende ourselves by the privation of reason, and by her drooping. The two naturall waies, to enter the cabinet of the Gods, and there to foresee the course of the destinies" (will this become in the play "take upon us the mystery of things as though we were God's spies?") "are furie and sleep" (283).

Neither Lear nor Paphlagonia are candidates for such an experience. But Lear is made for it, with his Renaissance pride of reason, "the marks of sovereignty, knowledge and reason" (I, iv, 253), and dreads it most of all: "O, let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven": then, being moved that way, he prays "touch me with noble anger," and receives what he prays for and the sort of divine madness which Montaigne describes. Then, after the long storm of his mind, where gusts of folly mix with the grander strains of madness, he enters into the outer "cabinet of the Gods" where he sees values that his reason had ignored; and finally, after more storm, falls into that sleep from which he wakes to his purgation, and the paradisal peace of reunion with Cordelia. All this is obvious, and hardly needs recording. But the subtler way in which Shakspere has picked up into his complicated pattern a dozen rich threads of Montaigne's argument deserves to be shown clearly.

The "judgement" here concerns arrogant reason, and how it shall be disparaged. Montaigne, an elementary psychol-

ogist, says that it rests upon sense experience, which is without credibility. Such experience is different in different men: indeed, according to his setting and mood it varies in the same individual. For reference I list a few of the pertinent passages:

1. "A young child heareth, seeth, and tasteth otherwise by natures ordinary rule, then a man of thirty yeares; and he otherwise then another of threescore" (320).
2. "Moreover, since the accidents of sickenesse, of madnesse, or of sleepe, make thinges appear other unto us, then they seeme unto the healthie . . ." (321).
3. "What we see and heare, being passionately transported by anger, we neither see nor heare it as it is" (316).
4. "Our senses are not onely altered, but many times dulled, by the passions of the mind. How many things see we, which we perceive not, if our mind be either busied or distracted elsewhere" (317).
5. Therefore was it, that a worthy Philosopher pulled out his eyes, that so he might discharge his soule of the seducing and diverting he received by them, and the better and more freely apply himselfe unto Philosophy" (315).

The briefest reflection will show that the play abounds in illustrations of all these. It is a picture of variable value-judgments guided by sense. At the very start, Lear's love for Cordelia is altered to hate. Almost the same circumstance changes the mood of the King of France from what seems to have been coolness to passion; for him Cordelia becomes "most rich being poor, most choice forsaken, and most loved despised." The issue between Goneril and her father in some small part is that between a woman of, let us say in terms of the first quotation, thirty years, and a man not of three-, but of "four-score and upwards." Lear is aware of this last mentioned condition, and in the first days of his sojourn with her tries to put aside some affronts to his dignity as rather the suspicions of his own mind than intended slights. Goneril tells him roundly that "all's not offence that indiscretion finds and dotage terms so" (II, iv, 199-). On the heath, when the rain beats him, and Gloucester pities him for it, he replies (as Taylor also points out) in terms of the third and fourth passages:

> . . . . . When the mind's free
> The body's delicate; the tempest in my mind
> Doth from my senses take all feeling else
> Save what beats there (III, iv, 11-).

Gloucester is no great philosopher: but though he does not pull out his eyes, like the truth-seeker of the fifth quotation, he has them pulled out for him with something of the same result:

> I stumbled when I saw. Full oft 'tis seen,
> Our means secure us, and our mere defects
> Prove our commodities (IV, i, 19-).

Montaigne indeed might have given yet other help to this passage: "the weaknesse of our judgment, helps us more than our strength . . . and our blindnesse more than our cleare sighted eies" (201); and "it is not by our meanes" we reach final knowledge (238).

There are other examples of this sort of sense-value-judgment in the play, such as: "Wisdom and goodness to the vile seem vile" (IV, ii, 38): "woes by wrong imaginations lose the knowledge of themselves (vi, 290-); Lear practically confesses ague as affecting his judgment (I. 107), and it is generally allowed that his final belief that the feather stirs on Cordelia's lips follows a stroke of apoplexy. (I find myself a little ashamed to note that these two maladies, "if a continuall ague may in the end suppresse our mind," "if an Apoplexie doth altogether . . . extinguish the sight of our understanding," are exactly mentioned, 279). But, passing on, I cite but two more in this connection, for they seem to me to help us to see what most of all we wish to see, the sensitiveness to impressions, and the transforming power of Shakspere's mind. Montaigne had climbed in the Alps and experienced vertigo in high places:

> ". . . and I could not without horror to my minde and trembling of legges and thighes endure to looke on those infinite precipices and steepy down-fals . . . Where I also noted, that how deepe soever the bottome were, if but a tree, a shrub, or any out-butting crag of a Rock presented it selfe unto our eyes . . . somewhat to uphold the sight, and divide the same, it doth somewhat ease and assure us from feare . . . And that we cannot with "some dread and

> giddinesse in the head, so much as abide to looke upon one of those even and downe right precipices" . . . (Here follows the passage already quoted, about the philosopher who pulled out his own eyes. (315)

It seems likely that this is the actual experience behind that imaginary picture of Dover Cliff and equally imaginary vertigo which Edgar gives to his blinded father (IV, vi, 11-). There is a rock in the Paphlagonian story to suggest the scene: the old king wishes to cast himeslf down from it to his death and is prevented ("afflicted prince," *cf. K. L.,* V, iii, 5) by his son, but Shakspere's additions are striking. The fanciful, of whom I am one, may even be let surmise whether Montaigne's shrub did not change into Edgar's samphire after a progress through the poet's mind, and that crag into purchase for his samphire gatherer. Montaigne, using this experience to prove how unstable the senses are, goes on to show how one sense sometimes tries to do the work of another when that is impaired, as Gloucester's sense of smell must do when he is bidden to use it to find his way to Dover (III, vii, 93-). Montaigne also knew a man blind from birth or near it who, in his observation of people and other business, made constant use of words relating to sight, though he depended upon hearing: "He will say as one of us: This hall hath a faire prospect: It is very faire weather: The Sunne shines cleare" (308) In the play also, though with a considerably different accent, "a man may see how this world goes without eyes" IV, vi, 153).

Among the evils that may so or may otherwise be seen, none is shown to the old Lear by his suffering, except what is entirely within his own personal history, filial ingratitude and bad judgment. But Lear is pierced to the heart by evidence, which his imagination renders, of many evils in human nature, and in the social system for which he has been responsble as king. These include the inadequacy of legal justice; the unprotectedness of the poor ("poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are"); the private lawlessness of those who administer the law; the power of wealth to moderate and poverty to sharpen justice:

> . . . . . Plate sin with gold,
> And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks;
> Arm it with rags, a pigmy's straw doth pierce it (vi, 169-).

and sensuality, particularly in woman. Montaigne considers all these also; and though the question may be put, "What does he not consider?" or "What but these could he consider?", there is some reply to it, fitting our present theory, in his accent and phrase, which in many instances is not very different from Shakspere's. "Justice," he says, "on the one side, is used but for a cloake and ornament . . . (131):

> "In the rabble case-canvasing of our plea-courts this by-word . . . *Let him joy in his good fortune,* is much in use, and is spoken of criminall offendors, who happen to meete with Judges in some milder temper, or well-pleased mood. For it is most certain that in times of condemnation, the Judges doome or sentence is sometimes perceived to be more sharpe, mercilesse and forward, and at other times more tractable, facile, and enclined to shadow or excuse an offence, according as he is well or ill pleased in mind" (278).

> "You relate simply your case unto a Lawyer: he answers faltring and doubtfully unto it" (being brother to the one the Fool thinks on, punning on 'nothing': Then 'tis like the breath of an unfeed —lawyer, you gave me nothing for it" (I, iv, 143). "Have you paid him well, have you given him a good baite or fee, to make him earnestly apprehend it . . .? See then an apparant and undoubted truth presents it selfe to his understanding" (281).

Then, on the side of distributive justice, he discusses what he calls "lustfull desires," that is all inordinate and ungoverned appetite:

> "*Lustfull desires* are either naturall, and necessary, as eating and drinking; or else naturall and not necessary, as the acquaintance of males and females: or else neither necessary nor naturall. Of this last kinde are almost all mens: For, they are all *superfluous* and artificiall. It is wonderfull to see with how little nature will be satisfied, and how little she hath left for us to be desired. The preparations in our kitchins doe nothing at all concerne her lawes" (165).

To my ear, quite possibly over-anxious, this seems echoed in Gloucester's speech after his conversion:

> "Let the *superfluous and lust-dieted* man,
> That slaves your ordinance, that will not see
> Because he doth not feel, feel your power quickly:
> So distribution should undo excess,
> And each man have enough" (IV, i, 68-).

and in Lear's comment upon Regan's question why he should *need* even one servant:

> O! reason not of need; our basest beggars
> Are in the poorest things *superfluous;*
> *Allow not nature more than nature needs* (II, iv, 267-)[1]
> Man's life is cheap as beast's.

But in both authors the "lustful desires" grow specialized in the modern sense. "Brute beasts," Montaigne says, "are much more regulare than we; and with more moderation containe themselves within the compasse, which nature hath prescribed them: yet not so exactly, but that they have some coherency with our riotous licentiousnesse" (166). Here Montaigne quotes a passage from Ovid which might have stirred the lines in the play beginning "Let copulation thrive" (IV, vi, 117-) and those immediately preceding. Ovid's birds that "breed by them, by whom themselves were bred" seem to have turned into Lear's adulterous wren (a libel on a neatly behaved bird which I have not seen explained). Then, note the passage about human gestation: physicians, philosophers, lawyers, divines are *"pell-mell* together by the eares with our women" about it (269). Join it with another of the sexual organs and appetites which "bid us range our selves unto a brutish situation . . . *more ferarum, Quadrupedumque magis ritu"* etc., and "those indiscreet and insolent motions, which women have so luxuriously found out . . ." (164) we are not far—the key words are almost always in the right place if one looks—from the continuing passages of the play, "To 't *luxury, pell-mell!"* and "down from the waist they are centaurs." Yet, more convincing, again, is the parallel between the basis for Lear's great climax, life is evil and we must endure it, and the passage Montaigne quotes from Lucretius (which comes to no climax):

> Thou must be patient; we came crying hither:
> Thou know'st the first time that we smell the air
> We waul and cry . . . . .

> When we are born, we cry that we are come
> To this great stage of fools (IV, vi, 183-):
>
> . . . . . .
> Vagituque locum lugubri complet, ut æquum est
> Cui tantum in vita restet transire malorum:

of which with its context, the infant just born, naked and helpless, Florio gives the translation:

> Then, as is meet, with mour'full cries he fills the place
> For whom so many ils remaine in his lives race (147).

We have thus followed the reconstruction of the God-King in the play as it was helped by the essay, beginning with his power and ending with his patience. But Lear is a father as well as a king, and the duplication of the theme of fathers and children in the sub-plot compels us to give it special treatment. Here we part company with the *Apologie* for a moment, to follow another essay of Montaigne, *Of the Affection of Fathers to their Children* (II, viii), as Shakspere followed it. This concerns the distribution of property by aged fathers to their capable children; and Montaigne argues for it strongly, though with one choice condition:

> "There is no reason . . . that a Gentleman of five and thirtie yeares should give place to his sonne, that is but twenty . . . But a father *over-burthend with -yeares,* and crazed through sicknesse, and by reason of weaknesse and want of health . . . doth both wrong himselfe, injure his, *idely* and to no use to hoord up . . . a great heape of riches . . . As for other pompe and trash whereof he hath no longer use or need; hee ought willingly to distribute and bestow them amongst those, to whom by *naturall* decree they ought to belong . . . The worthiest action, that ever the Emperour Charles the fifth performed was this . . . He resigned his meanes, his greatnesse and Kingdome to his Sonne, at what time he found his former undaunted resolution to decay . . . This fault, for a man not to be able to *know himselfe* betimes, and not to feele the impuissance and extreme alteration, that age doth naturally bring, both to the body and the minde . . . hath lost the reputation of the most part of the greatest men in the world" (II, 72, 73). "There are so many sorts of defects in age, and so much impuissance . . . Commandment and feare are no longer her weapons . . . I have knowen one whose youth had been very imperious and rough, but when he came to mans age . . . yet he chafeth, he scoldeth, he brawleth, and biteth, as the most boistrous and tempestuous mas-

> ter . . ." (76). "I that am ready" to give up goods and authority to my children, "would give over unto them the full possession of my house, and enjoying of my goods, but with such liberties and limited condition, as if they should give me occasion, I might repent my selfe of my gift, and revoke my deed" . . . (74). "For, if they prove, or be such surly-furious beasts, or given to churlish disobedience, as our age bringeth forth thousands, they must *as beasts be hated,* as churls neglected, and *as denegerates avoided*" (75-).

Here surely is the abstract of Lear's abdication, and the philosophy of Edmund's forged letter, "This policy and reverence of age makes the world bitter to the best of our times. . . . I begin to find an idle and fond bondage in the oppression of aged tyranny; who sways, not as it hath power, but as it is suffered" (I, ii, 50-). Shakspere's pen, as well as Montaigne's, was doubtless dipped in Charles' abdication ink, or some other thickened by special events of the time: but in the passages quoted there are several of the very phrases which occur in the play and there can be no question as to the immediate inkwell: "Idle" (that is, foolish, as in the essay), "Idle old man, that still would manage those authorities That he hath given away" (I, iii, 17-); "he hath ever but slenderly known himself" (i, 296). Also the essay confirmed some of the suggestions of the donnés, and so led to the situation in the play where Lear gives up "power, pre-eminence, and all the large effects that troop with majesty" (i, 132-), yet hoped, like Montaigne himself, to reserve some final authority, and found out too late that without what the essayist calls that "pompe and trash whereof hee hath no longer use or need," he could not defend himself nor yet "repente himselfe of his gift, and revoke his deed." The rest also follows in the pattern of the essays, overlaid upon patterns in the donnés. Gloucester finds Edgar, the alleged author of the letter, to be an abhorred, unnatural, detested, brutish, worse than brutish, villain (II, 83-): Lear holds that "nature is asham'd almost to acknowledge" Cordelia, Goneril is a "degenerate bastard" (iv, 277): and, if we need illustrate Montaigne's last quoted sentence completely, she is hated as a sea-monster, kite, serpent, wolf, and fox, in a few following lines, with more of the same sort in store for Regan.

Seeing that the outline of Edmund's character comes from the *Arcadia* where his prototype abuses father and brother, we need not stress Montaigne's assistance in developing it. His nature philosophy, "Thou Nature art my goddess" (I, ii, 1-) may have been prompted by the "naturall decree" (decree of nature) in the essay on *Fathers and Children,* which takes away the wealth of aged parents and bestows it upon those to whom it should belong. But equally well it might come from any part of the left wing of the current Nature-Nurture debate: "Nature," as Lyly's young Euphues boasts, who "was had in such estimation and admiration among the Heathen people, that she was reputed for the onely Goddesse in Heaven." Returning to the *Apologie,* however, I find it clearly influencing Edgar's discussion of "astronomy" and planetary influence, even though it takes the affirmative while he takes the negative. Montaigne here discloses himself in his most fantastic vein, appearing as a "sectary" (he frequently uses the word, 204, 208; and "sects," 199, 209, etc.) of an extreme opinion:

> "If our vertue, vices, sufficiency and knowledge, and the same discourse we make of the power of the starres . . . commeth as our reason judgeth by their meane and through their favour . . . .
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Ecce patrem nati perimunt, natosque parentes,
> Mutuaque armati coeunt in vulnera fratres.
> Non nostrum hoc bellum est, coguntur tanta movere . . .
> Manil. *Astron.*
>
> Loe sonnes kill fathers, fathers sonnes destroy,
> Brothers for mutuall wounds their armes doe beare,
> Such war is not our owne, forc't are we to it . . . (141).
>
> "So men are borne, either more or lesse warlike, martiall, just, temperate and docile: here subject to wine, there to theft, and whoredom . . . grosse-witted or ingenious: either obedient or rebellious; good or bad, according as the inclination of the place beareth, where they are seated" . . . So we see "some heavenly influence . . . to produce this or that nature, and to encline mankind to this or that *biase*" (292).

Gloucester seems to believe all this, and sees the kingdom wrecked and the king fallen from *"bias of nature"* because of "these late eclipses" (I, ii, 115-): Edgar, who asks Edmund since when he had become "a *sectary* astronomical"

is himself fitter for the description (l. 169): Kent holds that "It is the stars, the stars above us govern our conditions" (IV, iii, 34-). But Edmund has read more than they have, particularly the following essay, *Of Judging of Others Death* (II, xiii), where Montaigne changes sides in one of those pleasant moments which make him so useful as a philosopher for a dramatist to follow, and says that the notion that the stars are concerned with death of men is a *"common foppery"*[1] (328). So Edmund, joining all the passages, laughs at superstition:

> "This is the excellent foppery of the world . . . as if we were villains of necessity . . . knaves, thieves, and treachers, by spherical predominance: drunkards, liars and adulterers, by an enforced obedience of planetary influence; and all that we are evil in, by a divine thursting on: an admirable evasion of whoremaster man, to lay his goatish disposition to the charge of a star!" (I, ii, 132-).

His later actions, together with his philosophy expressed in his first speech adopting Nature as his goddess in defiance of law and custom, recalls yet another passage in the *Apologie:* this describes those whom "the new-fangles of Luther" have led away into "an execrable Atheisme," and predicts that if once "they be possessed with the boldnesse to despise, and malapertnesse to impugne the opinions . . . tofore held in awful reverence," they will soon reject as a "tyrannicall yoke all impressions they had in former times received by the authorities of Lawes, or reverence of ancient custome" (127).

III

This heretic Edmund is the indirect means of his father's attaining faith, just as the Fool is the indirect means of Lear's acquiring knowledge. But how valuable is this faith or knowledge? It is a question often answered unfavourably, which the *Apologie* helps us to answer in another way. Is this right? against Montaigne's own "Que scais je?" and the judgment of Pascal and the rest that his phrases of religion are mere mockery. If it is, here is the real value of such a study as we are making. Drawing up a list of parallels between essay and play is a diverting pastime.

Noting Shakspere convey and convert other works to his use, seeing blow across a page sparks that set his imagination on fire, is more valuable. Learning from a work of his time the "discreet judgments" which he accepted, and rising from knowledge of his particular patterns to his general meaning: this is the most valuable of all. So, contrary to critics like Swinburne, who find the close of the play wholly without hope, "here is the grove of the Eumenides, here is the darkness everlasting," I am inclined to say, here is faith in a spiritual order of immense power, under law, where causes release consequences beyond computation, of suffering or of happiness. And here is knowledge of the mysteries of God.

Disbelievers in such a "happy ending" (bare and attenuated beyond all earthly use) cite the intolerable bitterness of the play's final scene as their evidence, and quote the irreligious judgments scattered throughout the play. There are many of these last, particularly in the fourth act. Gloucester says, "As flies to *wanton* boys are we to gods: they kill us for their sport": but he says it before his change, at a time when he is unable to see what Shakspere makes us see clearly, that there is a causal connection between the way he has treated Edmund and the way Edmund treats him (IV, i, 36-). The good but dull Edgar commenting upon the blinding of Gloucester says "The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices make ministers to plague us" (V, iii, 172-) : and in saying this, he helps us to say that it is him own unpleasant virtue of believing everything that Edmund told him, quite as much as the bastardy, that "cost him his eyes." Albany holds that the death of Cornwall "shows you are above, you justicers," wholly forgetting that a loyal servant, whom supposedly the Justicers forgot, was killed killing him (IV, ii, 78-). Apologizing for the trick he has played on his blind father, Edgar bids him "Think that the clearest gods, who make them honours of men's impossibilities, have preserved thee" (vi, 73-). Surely there is not one of these that stands thinking on. Singly or together they lack value as evidence of the playwright's disbelief in a spiritual order, and are, every one of them, examples of the common human desire to "join God to destiny," and see divine assent when our

space of the world goes to our liking, and dissent when it does not. Montaigne helps us to see this, and it seems likely that it is because of him that Shakspere introduced these passages into the play: against the inducements of other pious-minded contemporaries of his, such as Holinshed, or such as the author of the old play whose conclusion nicely proves that "just Jehova . . . Doth governe all things in this spacious world," allowing no outrageous acts to be committed without "just revenge."

Montaigne reflects upon the matter very candidly, and gives precise advice about it to any within hearing:

> "How rashly have they joyned God unto destiny? (Which at my request, let none that beareth the sur-name of a Christian, doe at this day) . . . This . . . bold fiercenesse, to seeke to discover God, by and with our eyes . . . is the cause of that which daily hapneth unto us, which is, by a particular assignation, to impute all important events to God; which because they do not touch us, it seemeth they also touch him, and that he regardeth them with more care and attention, than those that are but slight and ordinary unto us" (235).
>
> "It was a strange conceit, with our own affliction to goe about to please and appay divine goodness. As the Lacedemonians, who flattered and *wantonized* their Diana, by torturing of yong boys, whom often in favour of her they caused to be whipped to death" (227)—a passage suggestive of the plays "as flies to wanton boys are we to gods," previously quoted.

Therefore I hold to the *Apologie* here: it helped Shakspere to reform the naïve pietism of the donnée, and helps us to see why he did it. With this help, we can partly understand the ironies introduced into Cordelia's history (which indeed go beyond Montaigne in their violence). "The gods to their dear shelter take thee, maid"; and they seem to, when France takes her; then seem not to, when she returns on their business and loses the battle. "The gods defend her." And then, "Enter Lear, with Cordelia (dead) in his arms."

But there is more to say of Cordelia, and the divine love of which she is the agent, and the redemption which she achieves: "thou hast one . . . who redeems Nature from the general curse." (IV, vi, 210-). Even after the defeat of

her army, and with the prospect of death for herself, she says with simple conviction: "We are not the first, who, with best meaning, have incurr'd the worst." God was no more disproved by their misfortune than he would have been proved had they prospered. And so also with herself. The old play had made her a model of Christian piety: the transferred worship of the Virgin which Shakspere had learned in his youth from the *Arcadia* and the *Book of the Courtier* helped him to develop her character. Considering some of her beauties, "Her voice was ever soft, Gentle and low, an excellent thing in woman;" one thinks of her, too, as close to his own desire. Considering her inability to "heave her heart into her mouth" (the idea is in the old play) and the echo of Luke ii, 49, in her "O dear father! it is thy business that I go about" (IV, v, 23-), and the Parable of the Tares, which her marvellous description of Lear's crown of thorns also suggests, together with the redemption she brings—"she lives. If it be so it is a chance which does redeem all sorrows" (V, iii, 268), and he comes to believe that she lives—one thinks of Isaiah's prevision of Christ. Or if this last be too high (I can understand how Shakspere could have used the Bible phrases out of an overflowing memory without deliberate intent, but I do not believe that he used them so) then say that in Lear's *Divine Comedy,* which has its descent into hell, "There's hell . . . there is the sulphurous pit" (IV, vi, 130-), and its purgation, "Thou art a soul in bliss; but I am bound upon a wheel of fire" (vii, 46-) : and its emparadising (V, ii, 7-25), she is Beatrice.

Montaigne was naturally unable to conceive such a character. The one great love of his life, for Estienne de la Boëtie, did not touch the *Apologie*. Yet it would have been strange if, possessing even so small and segregated a parcel of Renaissance Christianity as he did possess, he had not groped after such a pattern. Human reason being dependent upon sense data, as he says, and the senses most fallible, we have no way to come to absolute truth but by Faith. And yet, if only there were such a person: not foiled as we are foiled! "We had need of some body void and exempted from all these qualities, that without any preoccupation of

judgment might judge of these propositions as indifferent unto him: By which accoumpt we should have a judge, that were no man" (322). Then, of that "soverigne good of chief felicity" to which we desire to come, all the philosophers agree that it "consisteth in the peace and tranquillitie of the soule and bodie: but where shall we finde it?" (312, 186). We cannot find it. Heavenly conditions "must be thought to be unimaginative, unspeakable and incomprehensible" (223). And yet again, *could* we attain to it, would we not be resolved and unshakeable!

> "Had we fast-hold on God, by the interposition of a lively faith; had we hold-fast on God by himselfe, and not by us; had we a divine foundation, then should not humane and worldly occasions have the power so to shake and totter us, as they have. Our hold would not then yeeld to so weake a batterie: The love of noveltie: the constraint of Princes: the good successe of one partie: the rash and casuall changing of our opinions should not then have the power to shake and alter our beleefe" (129). "Why will not nature" (we might almost change it, to go with the other, into "Then will nature") one day be pleased to open her bosome to us, and make us perfectly see the meanes and conduct of her motions, and enable our eyes to judge of them . . ." (244).

This, I think it will be conceded, is prose and essayist version of the Paradise passage (as we may call it) of *King Lear* V, iii, 7-19: and it almost seems as though, in the living mosaic of great art, Shakspere had joined to this two other separate passages: first, from the old play, the scene where Lear and Cordelia alternately kneel one to the other and ask forgiveness and blessing: and second Montaigne's trifle, "Let a Philosopher be put in a cage made of small and thin-set iron wire" (314). So, as by "heavenly alchemy" out of separateness, disorder, simplicity, we have it finally: the two philosophers, joined in more than Stoic serenity, on their way to a cage and prison, secure above novelty, the constraint of princes, the alternation of parties, having fast-hold upon God:

> *Lear:* No, no, no, no! Come, let's away to prison;
> We two alone will sing like birds i' the cage:
> When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down,
> And ask of thee forgiveness: so we'll live,
> And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh

> At gilded butterflies, and hear poor rogues
> Talk of court news: and we'll talk with them too,
> Who loses and who wins: who's in, who's out;
> And take upon 's the mystery of things,
> As if we were God's spies . . . .

The play, admittedly, does not come to an end with this passage. It is not satisfied until Cordelia is dead, and Lear dead: departing intolerably, as it seems to some, from the old play. But perhaps here also Montaigne may be of help to those who wish that the perfected king and this daughter of perfection might have been allowed some earthly and happy years together:

> "The soule by reason of her trouble and imbecility, as unable to subsist of herself, is ever, and in all places questing and searching comforts, hopes, foundations, and forraine circumstances, on which she may take hold and settle herselfe" (264).

Such days of peace as the old play gave, and as Shakspere could have given, would be such a "forraine circumstance?" It appears so: "He hates him That would upon the rack of this tough world Stretch him out longer." So the end of the play as we have it, the curse brought by two "redeemed" by one, and that one hanged: all sorrows whatever the aged king met "redeemed by the final effort of his mind, and that effort the by-product of an apoplexy—perhaps this may be best explained (*que scais je?*) by Montaigne also. I myself am inclined to believe it:

> "Verily there was great reason, that we should be beholding to God alone, and to the benefit of his grace, for the benefit of so noble a beliefe, since from his liberalitie alone we receive the fruit of immortalitie, which consisteth in enjoying of eternall blessednesse. Let us ingenuously confesse, that only God and Faith, hath told it us: For, it is no lesson of Nature, nor comming from our reason" (265).

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[1]Pointed out by Robertson, p. 108.

"MY GRACIOUS SILENCE!"

By DAVID BROWN

CORIOLANUS'S words (*Coriolanus,* II, i, 187) in greeting his wife have been received with enthusiastic appreciation by all the commentators whom Furness cites (New Variorum edition, by H. H. Furness, Jr.). No matter what his temper, the critic finds nothing but praise for them, from Warburton—"it conveys the finest praise that can be given to a good woman"—through Ruskin —"The 'Nothing, my lord,' of Cordelia, and the 'gracious silence' of Virgilia are the everlasting seals set by the Master of the human heart upon the most sacred writing of its folded and golden leaves"—to J. M. Murray—"Magical words! They give a miraculous substance to our fleeting, fading glimpses of a lovely vision which seems to tremble away from the clash of arms and pride that reverberates through the play." These things, no doubt, are finely said, nor do I wish here to make objection to the voluble flow of words which Virgilia's silence has provoked among men. Shakspere has given Virgilia more words than Plutarch had, but did not add so many as to give her any imperfection in this respect. Needing her in his play, and finding little to characterize her in his source, he seized unerringly on her silence as a positive trait and added physical timidity as a contrast both with her husband and with her mother-in-law (to the latter of whom Shakspere had given more words than his source supplied and rather more warlike virtue). Thus, for different reasons, Virgilia is, like Cordelia and Desdemona, a woman of few words, and those words true.

What I miss among the commentators is reference to the tinge of irony in Coriolanus's words, to his affectionate enough compression of the proverbial utterances on the value of woman's silence in his epithet. For this seems to me to be implicit in the figure of speech he uses for her and seems to me to have been the source of the figure in Shakspere's mind. One need not cite the multitude of jests on woman's talkativeness, which is the other side of the idea.

"To be slow in words," says Launce, "is a woman's only virtue" (*TGV,* III, i, 338). This sort of thing is embedded in Coriolanus's words. More exactly, a comic and highly memorable scene of Ben Jonson's *Volpone,* written in 1606 and published in 1607, not long before the writing of *Coriolanus,* provided Shakspere with the phrase he used and with the information that it was of classical origin and dignity.

Lady Politic: I have a little studied physic; but now
I'm all for music, save, in the forenoons,
An hour or two for painting. I would have
A lady, indeed, to have all, letters and arts,
Be able to discourse, to write, to paint;
But principal, as Plato holds, your music,
And so does wise Pythagoras, I take it,
Is your true rapture; when there is concent
In face, in voice, and clothes: and is, indeed,
Our sex's chiefest ornament.
Volpone: The poet
As old in time as Plato, and as knowing,
Says that *your highest female grace is silence.*
(III, ii, 68-79)

Shakspere need not have known that the poet was Sophocles in his *Ajax* (1, 293). Γύναι, γυναιξὶ κόσμον ἡ σιγὴ φέρει (Woman, to women silence is the best ornament), but I think it likely that he had Ben Jonson's phrase in mind.

The mingling of irony and affection is the essence of Shakspere's point of view when love is the theme, and the compression of a whole proverb in an epithet is the essence of the style of his later plays. It is perhaps not inappropriate in this connection to remember Lear's words over the dying Cordelia:

"Her voice was ever soft,
Gentle and low—*an excellent thing in woman.*"
(*Lear,* V, iii, 272-3)

The old joke about women, which the Wyf of Bath resented, is buried here in the pathos of Lear's words. And it is this kind of Shaksperian affection, I think, that the critics have missed in Coriolanus's greeting of his wife.

Bucknell University
Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

SHAKSPERE — WHEN?

(Experiences with Shakspere in the Fifth Grade, College Elementary School, Flagstaff, Arizona.)

If the fifth grade had not had access to the juvenile shelves at the college library, it might not have happened; and if, when the children began to use the card catalogue instead of going to the shelves, the teachers had not deliberately spurred them on, it might have been different. However, when call slips presented at the desk began to concentrate on mysteries and ghost stories, and when children most reluctantly substituted books of the teacher's choice for S. S. Van Dyne, it was evident that something must be done. It was, of course, a problem in substitution; but *Treasure Island, Little Women, Arabian Nights*—the old stand-bys had all been read. Gradually, the solution began to frame itself: Charles and Mary Lamb—Shakspere—why not?

So it was that the better readers of the fifth grade class (approximately fifteen from a class of thirty) heard *Midsummer Night's Dream,* from *Lamb's Tales from Shakespeare.* They liked it, they said; in fact, they liked it immensely, in spite of the many characters and the difficulty of keeping them straight. The second day brought *The Merchant of Venice* to an even more enthusiastic audience, and *Romeo and Juliet,* the third day, was voted the best ever. The fourth day each child was given a copy of *The Tempest* from Lamb's Tales and allowed to read it for himself. "It's the best story we ever read," they declared; "Let's play it." The greatest difficulty was that all except one wanted to be Ariel, and that one would be Miranda if she might change the name to one she liked better.

The following day, the class was provided with copies of Shakspere's *Tempest,* and passages from it were read; some by the teacher, some by the children, while individuals read orally some of the simpler passages. Finally, the class dramatized the log-carrying scene and asked to play the entire story. Being told that the play would require at least two hours, the children willingly turned their attention to

King John. Briefly, the teacher told of the relationship between Arthur and King John, of French intervention, of the war, and of Arthur's imprisonment. With a copy in the hands of each child, the class read the scene where Arthur pleads with Hubert to save his eyes. Most of it was read by the teacher, although children were called upon to help with the simpler lines of conversation.

Enthusiasm ran high. The pupils wanted to present the scene; other members of the class felt that they were missing something, and the entire class was divided into groups of four, the better readers taking the parts of Arthur and Hubert, and the others those of the executioners. The groups scattered themselves about the campus and read. They carried books home with them, and by the second morning two children had almost memorized Arthur's lines, while another practically knew the part of Hubert. Furthermore, one little girl reported: "Since the teacher didn't tell us what happened to Arthur, I got our Shakspere down and found out." She told, in detail, of Arthur's escape and of his death. She knew what he had said on the wall, and after he had jumped. She also remarked: "Hubert had a terrible time convincing the nobles he hadn't killed Arthur."

Finally, two groups presented the scene; one to a group of parents; one to a college English class. The latter group questioned the children about their work, and one child, being asked how she liked Shakspere, said: "The more times I read it the better I like it." Another declared: "When I go to bed at night, it keeps running through my head, and I know Hubert's part as well as Arthur's." Two children began to greet the teachers with a playful "Good Morrow, Hubert." Other quotations which crept into usage were: "I would that I were your son, so you would love me;" "I warrant I love you more than you do me;" and "By my Christendom, so I were out of prison and kept sheep, I should be merry as the day is long."

We feel justified in drawing the following conclusions concerning the activity:

1. The children know that Shakspere was a playwright. They know a little of his plays.
2. The name "Shakspere" means to them pleasant and interesting experiences.
3. We have a foundation on which to build as the children grow older.
4. All children have memorized certain beautiful passages and some have begun to use quotations.

Of course, it would be foolish to consider teaching Shakspere to all fifth grade children. Necessary pre-conditions would be:

1. A group of children displaying somewhat mature reading tastes.
2. A love for Shakspere on the part of the teacher.
3. A readiness to note the first symptoms of fatigue or lack of interest on the part of the class, and to drop the work when such symptoms appear.

However, we feel that the work with this particular group was highly worth while, and that we have had from the lips of a ten year old child an expression of the surest sign of Shakspere's greatness: "The more times I read it, the better I like it."

IVERNIA TYSON.

220 East Fifth Street,
Florence, Colorado.

COMMUNICATION

McKERROW'S NEW SHAKSPERE TEXT

It is one of the quirks of fortune that Shakspere, the most edited poet in any language, had never had the benefit of the sort of textual editing that nearly all lesser men receive as a matter of scholarly course. It is no disparagement of the purposes of the innumerable editors from Rowe to Dover Wilson and Professor Kittredge (or is there a later one in the morning mail?) to observe that the simple scholarly question, "What is the text as Shakspere wrote it?" has never been answered, nay, never been es-

sayed.*

Between the facsimile editions, either photographic or typographical, and the modernized versions there has been no fixed point. That Professor Ronald B. McKerrow is in process of trying to establish. The forthcoming text will appear under the aegis of the Clarendon Press. The work has been under way, among other multifarious duties of the editor, for about ten years, and has reached the point where the announcement of publication dates may be anticipated. That we may know more about his intentions, methods, and editorial decisions, Dr. McKerrow has issued a *Prolegomena for the Oxford Shakespeare,* a study in editorial method, which will reappear as the general introduction to the work.

Avowedly conservative, McKerrow is attemping to "present Shakspere's work as nearly in the form in which he left it as the evidence which we have permits, clearing it indeed as far as possible of the numerous errors with which the ignorance and carelessness of copyists and printers have disfigured it, but without superfluous comment or any attempt to improve upon the text as the author left it."

Not a textual scholar, I shall not abuse my readers' patience with an uncritical discussion of the fascinating problems that are faced. Little has been written on the subject of editorial method in handling the problems peculiar to Elizabethan texts; to that little this addition must be great. Its assured modesty and calm a priori certainty that some cruxes cannot be made to evaporate begets confidence. Particularly logical are the disclaimers to a scientific method. McKerrow will not proceed from possibilities to asseverations of certainties with little regard to the impossibility of being sure.

> "It might, indeed, be better if in the domain of literary research the words 'proof' and 'prove' were banished altogether from statements of results obtained, for they can seldom be appropriate even in the work of the youngest and least experienced thesis-writer. Nothing can be gained, and much may be lost, by a pretense of deriving results of scientific accuracy from data which are admittedly uncertain and incomplete."

The forthcoming edition can be superficially described. Four or five plays will comprise a volume. The page will be externally similar to the Arden Edition, but the type will be larger. Textual notes will appear at the foot of the page, separated from the other notes. The plays will be presented in the virtual order in which they were written, Sir Edmund Chambers' dating being followed. The text will be the 'most authoritative' text of each play, that is, "that one of the early texts, which, on a consideration of their genetic relationship, appears likely to have deviated to the smallest extent . . . from the author's manuscript," reproducing that version rather than synthetically combining it with others. Wording, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and verse division will follow the original, even where inconsistent. Where there is good evidence of a printer's error, McKerrow will correct it, but he will not assume the right to alter what may have been the copy handed the printer.

Dr. McKerrow's undertaking is invaluable. The Delegates of the Clarendon Press could not have selected more wisely. I hope the vicissitudes of war and health do not interfere with what promises to be the crowning work of a brilliant career.

JOHN WILCOX.

Wayne University
Detroit, Mich.

*And in all probability never will be answered.—ED.

EDITORIAL NOTES AND COMMENTS

By S. A. T.

—:—

HAMLET, Sr. — MERCHANT OR KNIGHT?

Horatio, explaining to Marcellus and Bernardo (and to us) the cause of the threatened war on Denmark, gives details of a challenge-combat between Hamlet, Sr. and Fortinbras, Sr. According to the terms of the combat, embodied in 'a Seal'd Compact, / Well ratified by Law, and Heraldrie,' Hamlet would have forfeited to Fortinbras certain lands 'Had he bin Vanquisher, as by the same Cou'nant / And carriage of the Article designe[1] [*sic*], / His fell to *Hamlet*.' The second Quarto (Q2), the first issues of which were published in 1604, prints this passage as follows:

> 'Had he bin vanquisher; as by the same comart,
> And carriage of the article desseigne,
> His fell to Hamlet;' (I, i, 92-94).

It is noteworthy that in this passage Q2 not only substitutes "comart" for F's 'Cou'nant' but corrupts the word 'designd' into desseigne' (a variant 16th-century spelling), also partly an *e:d* error. (Q2 has another *e:d* error in the word 'returne' at the end of line 91, where F reads correctly 'return'd'.) From the time of Warburton editors have been debating whether Shakspere had written 'comart' or 'Cov'nant'. Even before the recent flamboyant but fortunately abortive attempt to give Q2 a standing which it does not deserve, some editors have incorporated Q's reading into their text for various reasons, though the vast majority of scholars and editors prefer F's word. It should be unnecessary to say to one who knows the temper of Shaksperian scholars that some have damned both houses and have proposed adopting a later Quarto's 'compact.'

In defence of 'comart' or 'co-mart,' defined as a 'bargain' or a 'joint bargain,' it has been urged that, with the reading 'cov'nant,' the words 'And carriage [= tenor] of the article [= clause] design'd' are tautologous, inasmuch as 'covenant' means the same as 'the article design'd' (Parrott & Craig—after Warburton). Rather than to charge Shakspere with having been guilty of a tautology, 'it seems better to suppose that [he] coined the word [comart] on the basis of "marte" [in line 74] . . . and that a scribe changed it to the more familiar "cov'nant" ' (Parrott & Craig).

'Comart' is objectionable for several reasons. The *Oxford Dictionary (N.E.D.)* records no other instance of the occurrence of this word. Of course, Shakspere might have coined it for the occasion; but inasmuch as he had a perfectly good, euphonious and easily intelligible word, which also satisfied the metrical requirements of the verse, there was no need for the coinage of a neologism. As for the alleged tautology: if the 'comart' refers to the legal and heraldic 'compact'—and all editors admit it does—the carriage of the article designed is just as tautologous with 'co-mart' as with 'covenant.' Furthermore, Shakspere had no aversion to being tautological. (Is not the word 'same' in line 92 superfluous?) But line 93 is not tautologous; it refers solely to that clause in the covenant

[1]The Folio (F), whose text we reproduce here, reads "designe" for "designd", obviously because of a copyist's or compositor's misreading of an *e* for a *d*, one of the most frequent misreadings in Elizabethan secretary script.

which related to the forfeiture of lands. 'Comart' is objectionable, too, because it suggests a bargain when arranging the terms and conditions of a duel. Heraldry, derived from chivalry, does not concern itself with bargaining.

'Cov'nant,' on the contrary, is exactly the word required in this passage. From time immemorial knights before a battle entered into solemn covenants. The word 'mart' would have cheapened the exploit of the 'valiant Hamlet.'

It will be recalled that the combatants entered into a 'sealed compact well ratified by law and heraldry.' The *Oxford Dictionary* teaches us that in English law 'a promise or contract under seal' was a 'covenant.'

The apostrophe in F's 'Cou'nant,' which is a hint towards the reduction of the verse into a pentameter (by substituting *th'* for *the*), combined with the many other punctilious indications of elision in the F text of this play (a comparatively rare phenomenon in Q2), shows that this text is based on Shakspere's own manuscript (or on a fairly faithful copy). No one living in 1623 had made such a study of Shakspere's prosody as to have been capable of editorially indicating all these elisions, and surely a compositor or scribe could not have done so.

That 'comart' is a misreading of 'counant' (written by a careless copyist of Shakspere's manuscript) is deducible from the following considerations. Double-stemmed minuscular secretary *r* and *n* were frequently written so nearly alike as to be indistinguishable. In this very play we find, in Q2, *'Guyldersterne'* for *'Guildenstern'* (in II, ii), 'a working' for 'a winking' (II, ii, 136 [Furness], one of the instances in which even Parrott and Craig desert Wilson), 'euer' for 'euen' (II, ii, 266, a Folio reading which even Wilson adopts—silently), 'when' for 'where' (II, ii, 426, P & C outWilson Wilson by adopting'when'), 'Lord' for 'loue' (III, ii, 159,—*u* and *n* are graphically identical), 'ore' for 'on' (IV, vii, 135, —in which case even Wilson, P & C, and Kittredge follow F, although many editors have adopted the Q text), and 'massene' (!) for 'Mazard' (V, i, 85, *n* for *r*, and *e* for *d*).

From a study of the text of several of Shakspere's best-printed plays we deduce that when he had occasion to write several short-minim letters in succession he not infrequently added a minim or omitted one. If he did that in 'cou'nant' his copyist or the composior could easily have misread the 'un' for 'm.' This, combined with a mistaking of *r* for *n*, would give us 'comart' for 'counant.' That the scribe who wrote the Q2 text, or the compositor who set it up, was a dull, unimaginative, uncultured and ill-spoken peasant is shown by this Quarto's many absurd readings, among which 'comart,' though bad, is by no means one of the worst. That he did not have access to an authoritative manuscript or to some person who knew the play, is shown not only by the many flagrant blunders but even more by the occasional omission of words and phrases which he could not decipher.

MEDDLING WITH SHAKSPERE'S TEXT

The atrociously garbled first quarto (Q1) of *Hamlet* makes Polonius say to his son (in I, iii, 64-66, Furness) 'do not dull the palme with entertaine, / Of euery new vnfleg'd courage, / Beware of entrance into a quarrell'. The infinitely better but also unauthorised second quarto (Q2) repro-

duces this in the following fashion:

> 'doe not dull thy palme with entertainment
> Of each new hatcht vnfledgd courage, beware
> Of entrance to a quarrell,'.

The first Folio (F1) gives us this text:

> 'doe not dull thy palme, with entertainment
> Of each vnhatch't, vnfledg'd Comrade. Beware
> Of entrance to a quarrell:'.

In the F1 version the absurd 'vnhatch't' (written 'unhatch't) is surely due to a misreading of 'un' (for the manuscript's 'nu' (a common Elizabethan spelling of 'new'). The important change from the quartos is the substitution of 'Comrade' for 'courage.' Up to very recently all editors followed F1 in retaining 'Comrade,' which makes perfectly good sense and good Shaksperian verse if (as Shakspere sometimes did) we put the stress on the second syllable.

Up to 1918 'Comrade' seems to have been objected to only by one commentator. Mr. Badham, quoted by Furness, called it a 'trashy correction made by the later Quartos [!] for the original reading *courage.*' But Mr. Badham was evidently not satisfied with Shakspere's 'original reading' and proposed to improve on him by reading *court-ape!* Mr. C. M. Ingleby also seems to have approved (in 1856) of 'courage' as a euphemism for a 'gallant.' Thus the matter stood until almost the end of 1918 when Mr. J. D. Wilson, determined to vindicate Q2's superiority over F1, labelled 'comrade' a 'piece of dirt' and the whole passage 'an addled metaphor,' even though he conceded that 'courage' was nonsense. (He had evidently not heard of Ingleby's suggestion.) The agreement of the two quartos in the bad reading 'courage' he attributed to their having been printed from the same manuscript, a 'smudged' manuscript which misled the compositor, and to the fact that the original and correct word must have contained a tailed letter near its termination. Substituting a *y* for the *g* in 'courage,' aided with a little more jugglery, *more suo,* he discovered that Shakspere's word was 'coccnaye,' a possible spelling for 'cocnaye,' a word which, he said, meant cock's egg, hence 'an affected brainless young person.' This word the Folio compositor mistook for 'comrayd' and set it up as 'comrade.'

This 'pretty emendation' (so Mr. Wilson proudly called it in 1934) led to considerable discussion in the pages of the London *Times Literary Supplement* in 1918-19. Professor Gollancz thought 'comrade' an 'undoubtedly erroneous reading' and could make nothing of 'courage.' Neither did he like 'cockney.' He therefore proposed reading 'coragio' in the sense of a 'hail fellow,' though he could cite no dictionary or any Elizabethan writer in its support. Along came Mr. Brett with the suggestion that Shakspere's word was 'comrague,' a variant of 'comrogue' (= a fellow rogue). Other suggestions followed; Mr. Thompson favored reading 'covèy' or 'couvade' (= 'a coterie of raw and callow friends'); Mr. Sargeaunt suggested 'covrage' or 'coverage' (= a nestling), and Mr. Rose proposed substituting the Italian 'cornacchia' (= a crow, a chatterer).

Subsequently, in 1934, Mr. Wilson reluctantly abandoned his 'cockney' and embraced Q2's 'courage,' explaining that in the interim he had learned that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the word 'courage' sometimes 'denoted persons, much as we now speak of *sparks* or *braves,*' and was so used by Sir Thomas Hoby

in his translation of Castiglione's *Il Cortegiano,* 'a book on which Shakespeare is most likely to have drawn for the character of Polonius.' Thus the quartos were 'completely vindicated'!

Of recent editors only Messrs. Parrott and Craig have followed Wilson in adopting the Q2 reading, even though they distort W's argument by saying that 'courage was sometimes applied to 'a man of high spirit.' They do not explain why Polonius should have warned his son against a man of high spirit. (Sir Thomas used the word in a highly complimentary sense, the equivalent of his author's *animi divini.*) To P & C 'it seems plain' that 'courage' was Sh's word, because Q1 and Q2 agree. To me, however, it seems plain that the Q1 and Q2 reading is the result of a misreading of Sh's word by the scribe of copy for Q1 and borrowing thence by the scribe of copy of Q2.

Professor Kittredge, in his recent edition of the play, very sensibly retains the F1 reading, partly because the text requires a word which should be stressed on the second syllable (the *Oxford Dictionary* shows that the word 'comrade' was frequently so pronounced, not so 'courage'), but he puzzles us when he goes on to say that *'courage* is an obvious misprint [!] for *comrague,* i.e., a fellow rogue.'

The confusion inherent in these discussions is, in all likelihood, due to an acceptance of Professor Wilson's erroneous notion that the ultimate or penultimate letter of Shakspere's original word must have been a tailed letter (*g, h, p, q, x, y, z*). One who knows the peculiarities of Elizabethan 'secretary' script knows, however, that 'comrade' could have been written with a *d* which looked like a *g*. In the F1 text of *Troilus and Cressida* we have (in V, ii, 10) 'finde' instead of 'singe,' (initial *s* mistaken for *f*, one mistake leading to another), in IV, v, 13, we have 'yong' for 'yond,' and in IV, iv, 24 'strange' for 'straind'—in all three instances a *g* substituted for a *d*, showing that the scribe made a *d* with a flourished downstroke which went down and to the left below the writing line. (Professor Leon Kellner, by the way, never noticed these *g:d* errors.) Such a *d* is depicted in my book, *The Handwriting of the Renaissance* (see the 10th *d* in §14 on page 36). It follows, therefore, that 'comrade,' making exceptionable sense, being perfectly appropriate in the mouth of Polonius, agreeing with Shakspere's habit of mixing his metaphors, fitting the metrical requirements of the verse, and resembling the bad word 'courage,' is the word that Shakspere intended and that Shakspre wrote. Thus again the Folio text of *Hamlet* is vindicated.

S. A. T.